

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING REBECCA FLANAGAN
FOR HER SERVICE TO THE U.S.
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND
URBAN DEVELOPMENT

HON. RAUL M. GRIJALVA

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 11, 2011

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Rebecca Flanagan for her public service.

Rebecca Flanagan was selected on March 24, 2002, as Director for the Field Office of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in Phoenix, Arizona and for the last 2 years has taken on the responsibility of the Tucson Office jurisdiction, as well. Rebecca is the senior management official for the close to 100 staff. She ensures that HUD's current and prospective customers gain the necessary access to the whole range of HUD services. She provides communities with technical expertise and continues to foster and develop public/private partnerships, and sustains her involvement within various community organizations.

Rebecca represents the Department throughout the State of Arizona to ensure effective and coordinated customer service and public relations.

Rebecca began her career 34 years ago with HUD as an Equal Opportunity Specialist in Denver, Colorado. She was hired to outreach to the Hispanic community to ensure their inclusion and access to HUD's programs business opportunities, and employment.

Rebecca transferred to Los Angeles and worked in the Community Planning and Development Division for the Los Angeles Office of HUD for 10 years, developing and sharing her expertise in community development with both large (ex. Los Angeles County) and small (ex. Santa Paula) communities within the greater L.A. area.

In 1990, Rebecca moved with her two high school aged sons to Phoenix after being selected as the Deputy Manager for the Phoenix HUD office. During her tenure, she was able to develop a number of key local policies including, the use of "cash on hand" by FHA borrowers to qualify using a down payment that was saved at home and not in a bank. It was very clear that in order to provide FHA insurance to the local underserved market of Hispanic and immigrant populations in Phoenix, that a policy like this was needed to allow these creditworthy borrowers to provide so-called "mattress money" as well as ensure that the prospective borrower was providing his/her own money. Another party to the transaction, namely the real estate agent or homebuilder, could not give the money. Given the policy's success in Phoenix, it has been adopted nationally by HUD.

During the last few years she developed a number of important partnerships for the Office including a HUD/DES partnership in which for the first time, the Arizona Department of Economic Security and HUD are jointly fo-

cused on their mutual clients living in public and assisted housing striving to become self-sufficient. Rebecca continues this focus through her involvement with Maricopa Workforce Connections Board, which oversees the one-stop career centers within the County.

In addition, Rebecca has involved the Phoenix HUD Office staff and resources in a wide range of community activities such as Job Fairs, Minority Appraiser Training, Adopt-a-School Programs, Summer Youth Programs, Homeownership education and fairs, and Faith-based conferences, all in support of HUD's mission and initiatives.

Rebecca is especially proud of her past community development efforts in the local Wilson neighborhood, located just east of Downtown Phoenix. After being the Principal for the Day she heeded the request from the school to "be a role model and help provide housing for the neighborhood". Rebecca created a coalition of school and neighborhood representatives, stakeholder businesses and agencies to assist in meeting the unmet needs of the Wilson students and their families. Rebecca was instrumental in getting the first 4 homes built in the Wilson area in over 40 years. Rebecca proudly mentored a young girl through high school, and tutored another young student in reading.

Rebecca was influential in bringing together Arizona leaders in business, industry, banks and non-profits, for a "peer to peer" meeting with the Mayor of San Jose and their leaders. The Arizona group flew to San Jose in the first ever endeavor by HUD's Phoenix Office, in gathering a prestigious assemblage of housing experts for a roundtable forum discussion of affordable housing. The meeting enlightened attendees about San Jose's strides and actual accomplishments to incorporate their best practices here in Arizona. Soon, other groups branched out to address the issue of affordable housing by formulating meetings and conferences, dialogs, summits, and other ongoing efforts to continue to assess the need for affordable housing within our communities.

Rebecca earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree with a major in Sociology, from the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA). She is married to Ray Lechuga, a local businessman, the proud mother of two (2) grown sons, Andres and Daniel Benites, and the proudest of all Nanas to Erin's and Andres' real live angels, Raven, Willow and Ivy and Jennifer and Daniel's angel Diego.

IN RECOGNITION OF MARJO RIVINIUS

HON. DENNIS A. CARDOZA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 11, 2011

Mr. CARDOZA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize MarJo Rivinius in the event of her retirement after thirty-eight years of dedicated service as Association Executive for the Lodi Association of Realtors.

MarJo was born and raised in Gackle, North Dakota. Her parents owned a local grocery store where she worked while growing up. MarJo attended local schools and graduated with a teaching degree from Jamestown College in North Dakota. She moved with her parents to the Santa Rosa area after college and got her first teaching job in Potter Valley.

MarJo married her high school sweetheart, Dennis in 1960. Dennis was in the Navy and stationed in Florida where she joined him after they were married. This was an eye opening experience for a girl from North Dakota. She learned about southern food, grits and segregation.

MarJo and Dennis moved to Lodi in 1961, where they have lived for the past 50 years. Over the years, MarJo has been involved in many activities associated with their two daughters, Pam and Denise. She is a past Campfire Girls Leader, 4-H Project Leader and also served on the original Lodi-Tokay Band Review Committee. She is a long-time member of Emmanuel Lutheran Church where she serves on the Finance Committee. MarJo is also an enthusiastic supporter of her five grandchildren's activities.

MarJo went to work for the Lodi Association for Realtors in 1974, where she has served as the Association Executive for the past 38 years. She has participated in the Association Executive's Committee for the California Association of Realtors during that time. MarJo has served the Association with the utmost of integrity and professionalism.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in honoring MarJo Rivinius for her dedication to the Lodi Association of Realtors and our community as a whole.

JOSEPH ANTHONY FORTINO TRIBUTE

HON. SCOTT R. TIPTON

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 11, 2011

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Joseph Anthony Fortino, who was born and raised in Pueblo, Colorado. During his life Mr. Fortino was both a successful businessman and a dedicated civil servant.

Early in life Mr. Fortino worked for his family grocery store. After graduating high school he served in World War II in the United States Coast Guard. After the war, he returned to Pueblo and his family grocery business with his father before joining Jackson Chevrolet as a salesman, and working his way up to partner. He won the Time Magazine Quality Dealer Award in Colorado for his hard work and dedication to the community.

Mr. Fortino was truly a leader and was involved on several boards and committees in Pueblo, including the Colorado Transportation Commission, on which he was the longest serving member. He was the president of the Pueblo Community College Foundation,

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